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OUNDLE
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
1954.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

M. J. PLEYDELL,
M.C., M.D., D.P.H.

OUNDLE:
ALFRED KING AND SON, PRINTERS.

OUNDLE,

August, 1955.

To the Oundle Urban District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Consequent upon the retirement of Dr. B. R. Turner in March of this year, I beg to report on the health of Oundle during the year ending 31st December, 1954. For over fifty years Dr. Turner was Medical Officer for Oundle and the town owes much to his public service and wise guidance in all matters relating to health.

During 1954 the statistics indicate that the health of the area has been good. The birth and death rates, after correction, compare favourably with those for England and Wales and there has been no serious outbreak of illness. The town stands at a height varying from 60 to 200 feet above sea-level and comprises an area of 2,075 acres. The Registrar General's estimate shows an increase in the population to 3,100, and there are 755 inhabitable houses according to the Rate Books at the end of 1954. The rateable value of the town is £19,837, and a Penny rate produces £79 12s. 6d.

The only notable industries are a brewery and a small boot factory, but the town provides market, educational, administrative and recreational facilities for the surrounding rural area.

In addition, there is an important Public School with over 600 scholars, a Grammar School, a County Modern School and an Elementary School within the town.

Vital Statistics.

Births: 38.

Birth Rate = 17.9 per 1,000.

	Male.	*Female.*
Live Births	13	25
Legitimate	12	24
Illegitimate	1	1
Stillborn	1	—
Infantile Death Rate	1	—

= 0.33 per 1000.

DEATHS.

TOTAL DEATHS = 27.

	Male.	*Female.*
	17	10

DEATH RATE = 7.32 per 1000.

Cancer	3 deaths.
Diabetes	1 death.
Heart Diseases	19 deaths.
Bronchitis	1 death.
Nephritis	1 death.
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1 death.
All other accidents	1 death.

Infectious Diseases.

Scarlet Fever	8
Pneumonia	2
Measles	1
Whooping Cough	1
Tuberculosis	2
Acute Poliomyelitis	1
Paratyphoid Fever	1

Diphtheria Immunisation.

Immunisation of children has continued throughout the year ; no cases of diphtheria have been reported.

NUMBER OF IMMUNISATIONS CARRIED OUT DURING 1954.

Diphtheria immunisation.....	4
Combined dipthheria and whooping cough immunisation	33
Total	37
Reinforcing immunisations	34

General Provisions of Health Service.

Medical Officer of Health : B. R. Turner, B.A., M.B., B.Ch.

Surveyor, Water Engineer and Sanitary Inspector : J. Colvin, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

District Nurses : Nurse Missen, S.R.N., and Nurse Cates, S.R.N.

Rating and Valuation Officer : Mr. A. B. A. Wright.

Health Visitor : Miss Miller.

Sanitary Circumstances of the area.

The water supply of the town is derived from the river and provides a good but hard supply. Water samples were taken regularly throughout the year and I am glad to be able to report that they were all satisfactory. The effluent from the sewage treatment works however, does not satisfy requirements, and this problem will need detailed investigation in association with the future housing programme.

Factory Act.

PART I OF THE ACT.

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises (1)	*Number on Register* (3)	*Number of*		
		Inspections (4)	*Written notices* (5)	*Occupiers prosecuted* (6)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	10	12	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ...	4	9	1	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises) ...	4	19	—	—
TOTAL	18	40	1	—

2. *Cases in which Defects were found.*

One.

PART VIII OF THE ACT.

Outwork (Sections 110 and 111).

Nil.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. J. PLEYDELL, M.C., M.D., D.P.H.

Oundle Urban District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT OF WATERWORKS ENGINEER, SURVEYOR AND SANITARY INSPECTOR.—Year Ending 31st December, 1954.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The annual report for the Oundle Urban District and a summary of the works completed during the year ending 31st December, 1954, are herewith submitted for your consideration.

Highways.

Shortage of labour prevented the completion of various road improvement schemes planned for the year, but I am pleased to report that Drumming Well Lane, which was in urgent need of attention, has been paved, kerbed, surfaced and drained to a satisfactory standard.

The programme of surface dressing of roads for the year had to be abandoned in view of the delay in completing Drumming Well Lane. This delay arose from shortage of labour.

Ship Lane has been repaired and a considerable area of footpaths throughout the town have been surface-dressed and repaired. The area in front of the Victoria Hall has been re-surfaced.

Additional roadside seats have been erected on Glapthorne Road and street waste-paper baskets have been provided throughout the town.

Routine gritting, snow-clearing and scavenging have received constant attention.

Sewers and Sewage Disposal.

The town's Sewage Works were seriously flooded at the end of the year when the River Nene overflowed its banks. During this period, no treatment of the sewage was possible and special efforts had to be made to keep essential machinery free from water.

Some silting-up in the East Road sewer has been experienced and dredging operations were found necessary.

The Benefield Road sewer was subject to a total stoppage at one period during the year, but immediate remedial measures were taken and no further trouble has been experienced.

The mangold crop remained difficult to dispose of, and clamping-down to the Spring was again found necessary.

The pumping equipment at the Barnwell Road Pumping Station broke down on two occasions. The second time involved considerable expense in repairs.

The proposed construction of another 58 houses draining into the town's Sewage Works will increase the load on this plant, and there is little doubt that the provision of a new Sewage Works cannot be delayed much longer.

Water Supply.

The early months of the year found your Water Undertaking in a difficult position. The two regular pumping attendants were almost simultaneously involved in serious accidents, and their duties had to be taken over at very short notice by your general staff.

In addition, the first month of the year saw the climax of a very dry period which made necessary special measures to deal with a threatened water shortage. I am pleased to report that an emergency scheme, prepared to deal with this shortage, was never required.

Arising from the accident at the Waterworks, additional guard rails were erected and some improvement in general safety was achieved.

During the year, a 6″ trunk main supplying water in bulk from the Oundle and Thrapston Rural District Council was installed and a temporary connection made to your Reservoir pending the construction of additional storage space.

Minor improvements to the Waterworks were completed during the year, including the re-siting of the sanitary accommodation, the overhauling of the brine-preparing plant for water-softening, the fitting of a new fibre gear wheel to the pumps and repairs to the chlorinator.

In view of the additional supply available from the Oundle and Thrapston R.D.C., the need for a stand-by oil engine did not exist and this plant was sold by tender.

During the year, the Herne Road main extension, 580 ft. in length, with a number of service connections and a fire hydrant, was completed.

The routine skimming of filter beds, replacement and repair of hydrants, fixing of water motors, replacement of tap washers and repairs to underground stopcocks and service pipes has continued throughout the year.

In all, 25 new connections to the water mains, including the service pipes and stopcocks, have been completed. All

this work has been carried out without any direct charge to the consumers affected.

During the year, 14 water samples were submitted for bacteriological examination and satisfactory results were obtained on all occasions.

Some complaints were received during the year that a green staining from copper pipes used for the supply of water to Council houses was giving rise to illness. A special chemical analysis was made of the water and the results showed that whilst minute traces of copper were indicated, no possible danger to health existed.

The proposal to build additional houses at Rock Road leaves no doubt that a serious shortage of pressure will be experienced in the Glapthorne Road area, and action will have to be taken to improve supplies in this area.

Bathing.

The Council Bathing Pool was opened for public use during the summer months at week-ends, public holidays and the month of August.

A considerable improvement in the purity of the water was achieved by altering the filtering arrangements and incorporating a pump in the system. These improvements, with the addition of chlorine, resulted in satisfactory bacteriological samples and no need arose to close the Pool at any time.

Whilst no records of attendance were kept, the Pool was very popular in spite of the very poor summer experienced.

A detailed plan was prepared for a new Swimming Pool in New Road, but the high cost prevented any progress with this scheme.

Refuse Collection.

Considerable difficulty was experienced during the year in connection with the tipping of refuse at the Churchfield Lane tip, and notice was given by the owners to quit the land and reinstate it in its original condition.

This work was completed and temporary tipping commenced at the end of Ashton Road.

Planning approval was sought to re-open for use another tip at Ashton Road, but permission was not forthcoming and a further site was suggested along Herne Road. Planning approval was granted for this land, and action is now being taken for the purpose of acquisition.

Rodent Control.

Rodent control work has proceeded satisfactorily during the year and the area generally is free from any major infestations.

During this period, 37 treatments were given to dwelling-houses involving a total of 193 properties.

In addition, nine treatments were given to business premises, two to agricultural properties and seven to Council property.

The town's sewers were test-baited twice during the year. 10 % of all manholes were treated. No serious infestation was indicated by the results obtained.

Salvage.

The collecting, sorting and baling of waste paper has continued throughout the year. Prices generally for waste paper are on the rise and collection is becoming more economical.

The collecting facilities of the Council, however, are not satisfactory for dealing with the situation and some improvement is urgently required.

Housing.

The Tilley Hill housing site has now been completed by the erection of ten three-bedroomed houses, except for some minor work to the area in the centre of the Estate.

The Rock Road scheme has been surveyed and a layout plan and detailed working plans for the first stage of the scheme completed. Further progress is not possible until all the necessary land has been acquired.

The first stage will consist of 18 houses and the final scheme, when completed, will provide 58 housing units.

Cemetery.

The Cemetery continued to be maintained at a very high standard during the year. Extra trees were planted and footpaths gravelled.

Plans were prepared for an additional access to the Cemetery and the work was placed in hand before the end of the year.

Food Inspection.

Two slaughterhouses have been licensed in the town and occasional slaughtering takes place. All carcases are inspected after slaughter before being passed as fit for human consumption.

Two milk dealers are licensed annually for the sale of designated milks in the town.

The following foodstuffs were inspected and condemned during the year :—

19 tins	Fruit.
11 tins	Meat.
20 lbs.	Dried Fruit.
310 lbs.	Cooking Fat.
7 lbs.	Ground Rice.

Visits and Inspections in connection with the Sanitary Conditions of the District.

Drainage and sewage disposal ...	76
Moveable dwellings	5
Refuse tip...	25
Water supply	231
Keeping of animals	9
Bathing pool	25
Housing complaints	172
Food premises	30
Food inspection ...	26
Rodent infestations	58
Smoke nuisances...	3
Cemetery ...	25
Infectious diseases	9
	694

General.

This year has been completed without any serious breakdown in the town's services.

Alterations to the new Council Offices absorbed a certain amount of labour during the year, but the results achieved have been worth-while. Opportunity was taken during this period to establish a new materials store and stock-keeping system.

Further re-organisation of the office work was made, a new wage book was introduced and a comprehensive scheme of costing and charging repairs to individual Council houses.

A new filing system and other improvements have been introduced for the keeping of records.

I wish to thank the Members of the Council and their staff for their great help in carrying out the work of this Department.

J. COLVIN, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.